

**October 7, 2009**

**The following is a response to the 10/5 Action Committee for Transit Press Release:**

<http://www.actfortransit.org/archives/press/2009Oct06ReINMMCTunnel.pdf>

**The assertion that the County Executive and the Department of Transportation are operating in secrecy on this issue is not at all accurate.**

**Monday's meeting with County Executive Isiah Leggett, Congressman Chris Van Hollen, and Lt. Governor Anthony Brown included representatives from neighborhood associations, the Greater B-CC Chamber of Commerce, and nearby institutions. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the range of transportation improvements – sidewalks, bikeways, transit, and road improvements - under development to meet the challenge of the opening of the expanded Bethesda Naval Hospital in 2012.**

**There is no "secret tunnel" or "secret meeting" as either of the two newspaper reporters who were in attendance at Monday's meeting could attest to.**

**The concept of a multimodal tunnel has been openly and publicly discussed both on Monday and three weeks ago at a BRAC Implementation Committee meeting attended by many members representing surrounding communities. The exact drawings depicted in the Action Committee for Transit press release belong to Clark Construction and, unfortunately, the County is not at liberty to release them. However, it is important to understand that these drawings are conceptual and do not necessarily depict what will be constructed. The full design and construction for any multi-modal tunnel would be bid through our careful and legal procurement process. All construction firms would have an equal opportunity to compete for the project.**

**There are no diverted funds. In fact, no funds have been allocated by any entity for any improved Metro access that we are aware of. Funds have been requested, including the TIGER grant request that we briefed the community on both Monday and three weeks ago at a BRAC Implementation Committee meeting. But there are no existing funds to be diverted and the grant programs that may fund this proposal are not in any way, shape or form limited to transit programs or the proposal favored by ACT.**

**Indeed, the TIGER grant specifically favors multi-modal proposals, which the County Executive's proposal clearly is. Had we submitted the proposal favored by ACT (a more expensive, single-mode proposal, with long-term operating costs), we would almost assuredly not receive any funding under the TIGER grant. The total dollar value of proposals submitted for the TIGER grants nationwide is \$57 billion -- for a pot totaling only \$1.5 billion. Given those odds, a multi-modal proposal is clearly our only shot.**

**The County Executive is committed to working with the community, the State and the Federal Government to try to minimize the inevitable disruption from the move of Walter Reed to Bethesda. We have worked tirelessly getting input from the community and communicating our needs to the State and Federal Government, including the Navy. Clearly part of the effort to meet the community's needs include improving the ability of pedestrians and transit riders to reach both NIH and the Navy installation. The Executive's proposal would accomplish this goal in a cost effective manner that maximizes the ability to receive very scarce Federal funding.**

**If you have any further questions about any of the above please feel free to contact me at [kenneth.hartman@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:kenneth.hartman@montgomerycountymd.gov).**

**Sincerely,**

**Kenneth B. J. Hartman  
Director, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center**